



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

240 airmen from Air National Guard's Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing returning home this week

Approximately 240 members of the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing are scheduled to return Thursday from voluntary 50- to 120-day tours of duty in Iraq. The 115th Fighter Wing is based at Dane County Regional Airport – Truax Field, Madison.

Most of the returning unit members volunteered to serve for 50 days of a regularly scheduled 120-day Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotation, as Air National Guard units often cover four-month rotations with personnel and equipment from several similar units. Other personnel returning tomorrow served longer overseas tours as part of the same mission.

Air National Guard deployments are usually organized in AEF cycles, which schedule Air Guard units for missions of up to 120 days every 20 months. The rotations do not usually require an entire unit, so the Air Guard is able to support these assigned missions with volunteers. Some members of the 115th Fighter Wing have deployed overseas as many as seven times in the past ten years.

During this deployment, the 115th Fighter Wing supported ground forces in Iraq with close air support and other combat and combat support capabilities directed by the combatant commander. Deployed personnel represented operations, logistics and aircraft maintenance and include F-16 pilots and crew chiefs, intelligence, life support, supply, munitions, avionics, engine, hydraulics and other unit specialties.

Even though more than 80 percent of the Wisconsin National Guard's soldiers and airmen have served on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001, most have completed their missions and more than 6,800 are currently available to provide civil support here in Wisconsin, if required.

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NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: 115th Fighter Wing personnel will return on a chartered airliner expected to arrive in Madison at about 6:00 p.m. Thursday. After about one hour in-processing at the air base, unit members will be transported in small groups to the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs headquarters (2400 Wright Street) to be reunited with their families. There is no formal return ceremony associated with this event. Troops and families will be reunited on the drill floor of the state headquarters building. This is on the northeast corner of the building, with ample parking available for broadcast trucks. Please contact Tim Donovan (608-242-3050 or cell 608-516-1777) if you need to make arrangements for equipment trucks. Other news media representatives must use the main building entrance, which faces the intersection of Wright Street and Minuteman Drive.

Current news releases are available at: <http://dma.wi.gov/news.asp>